

bender on my way to votes, I was unable to record my rollcall votes 400–402. Had I been present I would have voted “yes” on all votes.

A TRIBUTE TO THE 2006 ELLIS ISLAND MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 26, 2006

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the 2006 recipients of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. This medal—created in 1986—aptly named for Ellis Island, an enduring symbol of the diversity that characterizes our great Nation, commemorates and recognizes Americans of all ethnic backgrounds who have made significant contributions through their own perseverance and sacrifice to our society and culture. By honoring these outstanding individuals, we honor all who share their origins and we acknowledge the contributions they and other groups have made to America.

The Ellis Island Medal of Honor is presented annually by the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations (NECO), representing more than 250 organizations that span the spectrum of ethnic heritages, cultures and religions. Since 1986, approximately 1,700 American citizens have received Ellis Island Medals of Honor, including six American Presidents, several United States Senators, Congressmen, Nobel Laureates, outstanding athletes, artists, clergy, and military leaders. Collectively they represent a remarkable fraternity of individuals who have distinguished themselves as outstanding human beings and exemplary citizens of the United States. In addition, NECO awards one International Ellis Island Medal of Honor each year. This year's international honoree was Martin J. Sullivan, President and Chief Executive Officer of American International Group, Inc. Mr. Sullivan is British.

When the immigrant station at Ellis Island, New York, opened on January 1, 1892, it admitted 700 immigrants into the United States on just its first day of operation. By the time the center closed in 1954, 17 million immigrants had passed through its doors. The Ellis Island administration and staff, on average, processed up to 5,000 people per day. Many of these newcomers had little or no knowledge of English, hardly any money, and many arrived with only the clothes on their backs. They arrived risking their lives in exchange for freedom and a better way of life.

I, once again, commend NECO and its Board of Directors headed by my good friend, Nasser J. Kazeminy, for honoring these truly outstanding individuals for their tireless efforts to foster dialogue and build bridges between different ethnic groups, as well as promote unity and a sense of common purpose in our Nation. As Rosemarie Taglione, Executive Director of NECO, so eloquently said in connection with this year's awards ceremony: “NECO's message of tolerance and harmony among diverse ethnic groups is, perhaps, even more important today than it was 20 years ago.”

Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing the good works of NECO, and congratulating all of the 2006 recipients of the Ellis Island Medals of Honor.

Elizabeth Agabian, Cesar Baez, Vartkes Barsam, Harry E. Bovay, Jr., Dawn Bryan, Fredy Bush, Joseph R. Calabrese, M.D., Tykya Camaras, Charles Carey, Edmund N. Carpenter II, Josip Cermin, Vahan Chamlian, Yong Jin Chang, George Chimples, Benjamin B. Choi, Esq., Dr. Deepak Chopra, Maxine Chou, Richard Corkery, Frank Corvino, Rita Cosby, John R. Costantino, Robert E. Courtney, Esq., Ed Cox, Long Deng, Vlade Divac, Kathleen M. Donahue, Ali Ebrahimi, George Elias Jr., Nijad Fares, BG Margrit M. Farmer, Lu-Jean Feng, MD, Siegfried Fischbacher, Col. David Fitzgerald, Aldo G. Frustaci, Esq., Fred Grapstein, C. Joseph Grignaffini, Sang-Ki Han, William Hanna, Richard Hayden, Roy Horn, Mori Hosseini, Jirair S. Hovnanian, Irwin Jacobs, Chief Joanne Jaffe, Thomas F. Kane, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, Charles Evans Kilbourne III, Kwang Sung Kim, Peter Koo, Nat LaCour, Shau-wai Lam, Dean Lampros, Thomas D. Lee, Hon. John Lehman, George G. Makris, Roberta Mann, Hon. Rafi Manoukian, Col. Rick Martin, Ronald Martino, Jamie Masada, Fariborz Maseeh, Martin G. McGuinn, Dr. Navin C. Mehta, Jose Mejia, Edward Miller, Hamid Moghadam, VADM Kevin J. Moran, Dr. Navin Nanda, Luke Nasta, Frank Newell, MD, William C. Norris, Antranig M. Ouzoonian, Dinesh Patel, Hon. Tim Pawlenty, RADM David Pekoske, Fred Pezeshtkan, Mark Pigott, Robert Price, Hon. Thomas Ridge, Imelda Roberts, Col. Angela Salinas, Frank Sciame, Niranjan Shah, John Shall, Thomas Nunziato Shannon, Jr., Dr. Hosein Shokouh-Amiri, Dr. Grace Shu, Dr. William T. Smith, Bruce A. Smith, Lewis T. Smoak Esq., Klaus-Peter Statz, Mitchell Steinhouse, Michael Stern, Martin J. Sullivan, Ramon M. Tallaj, MD, Dr. William Tansey III, Michael Tong, Rev. Nicholas Triantafyllou, Lester Trilla, Manny Villafana, and Walter Wang.

**CELEBRATING HUGO,
MINNESOTA'S CENTENNIAL**

HON. MARK R. KENNEDY

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 26, 2006

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the centennial anniversary of the city of Hugo, Minnesota, located in my district.

Originally settled on a small plot of land in the 1850s, the town of Hugo was formally established in 1906 around a railroad and a post office.

Although its beginnings were modest, by 1917, this small town, populated by residents who made their living cutting and hauling wood to the railroad, had its own hotel, store, and school, and had begun to build its reputation for quality agriculture.

One hundred years later, Hugo has remained true to its roots, and is still known for its commitment to its rich farmland.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join the residents of Hugo in celebrating its first one hundred years. It is solid communities like this which make Minnesota great.

WELCOMING IRAQI PRIME MINISTER AL-MALIKI TO WASHINGTON

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 26, 2006

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, just 3½ years ago, Iraq was controlled by a brutal dictator who killed an average of 300 people a day. Iraq has now been liberated, and a fledgling democracy has taken root. The Iraqi people—in the face of terrorist threats—turned out in droves to ratify a constitution and elect their representatives. Today, this Congress and the American people have heard from the democratically elected leader of Iraq, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

I am grateful for the Prime Minister's address, as I appreciate his message of hope and progress. The training of Iraqi Security Forces is advancing rapidly. The parliamentary cabinet has been completed. Iraq has become a civil society.

Having visited Iraq six times, I have witnessed firsthand the progress being made. While there is still a long road ahead, the United States will continue to stand with the Iraqi people which protects American families. We will together make Iraq the graveyard of terrorists.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11th.

COMPETITION

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 26, 2006

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the value of competition in our Department of Defense acquisition process. Without competition in the acquisition process we have no choices. Without competition, innovation does not exist. Without competition we have no bargaining position relative to costs. Without competition the capability of our military stagnates.

Some would argue that we must protect our industrial base. I would suggest that competition does that very thing. We live in a global economy and, when U.S. industry does not produce competitive products, our industrial base suffers. It is true in virtually every industry.

If we are to continue to procure the best military equipment for best value the taxpayer dollar can afford, we must preserve the competitive process. In today's global economy that means we must not shy away from our allies' participation. Rather we should learn the lessons of the commercial sector and embrace the value of their partnership.

Ultimately, what does competition mean? It means a fair and open competition through an objective, quantifiable process. Secretary Rumsfeld for 6 years has espoused a capabilities based acquisition process. It is time to execute those words and follow the documented process.

Air refueling is the key enabler to our global military might and we need to get the competition for the KC-135 Replacement program